

**CLAIMS**

1. Method for the drying of the leather side (2) of pelts (4) from furred animals, where the pelt (4) is applied and stretched on the outside of a hollow distension element (6), the surface of which has an open structure, with the leather side facing the pelt board (6), and where the pelt is secured in this position during the drying process by the drawing-on of a holding-bag (5) which, at least over a part of the lower end of the pelt, presses this against the board (6), and where the drying of the leather side (2) of the pelt takes place by replacement of the air inside the cavity (8) of the distension element (6), and herewith the air which exists under the open structure.  
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2. Method according to claim 1, where replacement of the air inside the hollow distension element (6) is carried out by placing one or more distension elements (6) in a cooperating drying aggregate (100) comprising an encapsulation (102) which defines a cavity (104) with first openings (112) for the placing of at least one distension element (6), further openings (120,120') near the respective first openings (112) lying within the limit of the foot ends (16) of the respective pelt boards, so that the further openings (120,120') stand in connection with the  
10 cavities in the respective distension elements/pelt boards (6) which are placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110), so that the air in the cavity of a distension element/pelt board (6) which is placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110) is changed by replacement of the air in the cavity (101) by means of an air replacement arrangement (106).  
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2. Method according to claim 1, where replacement of the air inside the hollow distension element (6) is carried out by placing one or more distension elements (6) in a cooperating drying aggregate (100) comprising an encapsulation (102) which defines a cavity (104) with first openings (112) for the placing of at least one distension element (6), further openings (120,120') near the respective first openings (112) lying within the limit of the foot ends (16) of the respective pelt boards, so that the further openings (120,120') stand in connection with the  
20 cavities in the respective distension elements/pelt boards (6) which are placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110), so that the air in the cavity of a distension element/pelt board (6) which is placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110) is changed by replacement of the air in the cavity (101) by means of an air replacement arrangement (106).  
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3. System for use in the drying of the leather side (2) of pelts (4) from furred animals according to claim 1 or 2, and comprising a distension element/pelt board (6) on the outside of which a pelt (4) is drawn and stretched and secured during the drying with the leather side (2) facing towards the surface (12) of the pelt board  
30 6, characterised in that it comprises a hollow elongated distension element (6) with a front end (14) and a foot end (16) and a surface with an open structure, and where the foot end (16) cooperates with a drying aggregate (100) comprising an encapsulation (102) with a cavity (104) connected to an air replacement arrangement (106), and said encapsulation (102) comprising at least

an upwardly-facing surface (110) with first openings (112) which cooperate with a lower part (68) of the foot end (16) of the pelt board, and further openings (120,120'), so that the air in the cavity (8) of a distension element (6) which is placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110) is changed by replacement of the air in 5 the cavity (104) by means of the air replacement arrangement (106).

4. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 3 for the drying of pelts (4), where the drying of the pelt (4) take place by drying the leather side (2) of a pelt (4) stretched and held in this position on the pelt board (6), where the pelt board 10 (6) has a longitudinal axis (18), a first transverse axis (20) (breadth axis) and a second transverse axis (22) (height axis), a front end (14) for engagement in the cranium end (18) of a pelt (2), and a foot end (16) which is preferably terminated at right-angles in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) of the pelt board, c h a r a c t – e r l s e d in that the pelt board (6) at least has a first and a second arched

15 surface (26, 28) with an open structure which defines a cavity (8), and where the surfaces (26,28) of the pelt board (6) are configured in a substantially symmetrical manner around at least two of the defined axes (18,20,22), and where the pelt board (6) comprises at least one opening to the cavity (8) in the foot end (16).

20 5. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 4, c h a r a c t e r l s e d in that the pelt board (6) at least has a first and a second arched, holed/perforated surface (26,28) which defines a cavity (8), and where the pelt board (6) is configured symmetrically around at least two of the defined axes (18,20,22), and where said arched surfaces (26,28) comprise perforations/holes (10) which stand 25 in connection with the cavity (8).

30 6. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 4 or 5, c h a r a c t e r – i s e d in that the extent of the board in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less evenly decreasing in the direction of the front end (14), which is pointed though rounded, extending from an area (15) of the board near the foot end (16), where its extent in the direction of the first transverse axis (12) and the second transverse axis (14) is more or less constant.

7. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-6, characterised in that the surface (26,28) of the board has a first grooving (29) which is oriented substantially in the direction of the longitudinal axis (18).

5 8. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 7, characterised in that the first grooving (29) in the surface (26,28) of the board is limited to an area (15) of the board nearest to the foot end (16), and extending to a distance from the foot end (18), where the extent of the board in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less constant, to and  
10 including a part of the area (33) where the extent of the board in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less evenly decreasing in the direction towards the front end (14).

15 9. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-9, characterised in that the surfaces (26,28) have a second grooving/serrations (31) arranged in a substantially transverse manner in relation to the orientation of the first grooving (29).

20 10. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 9, characterised in that the extent of the second transverse grooves/serrations (31) is limited to an area (15) of the board nearest the foot end (16), and extending for a distance from the foot end (18), where the extent of the board in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less constant,  
25 to and including a part of the area (33) where the extent of the board in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less evenly decreasing in the direction towards the front end (14).

30 11. Distension element /pelt board (6) according to claim 9 or 10, characterised in that the tops (42) of the transverse grooves/serrations (31) are aligned, and where the part between two consecutive groove tops (35), extending from a groove top nearest the foot end (16) and towards the front end (14), is inclined

towards a more or less plane part (37), and where the part (39) between the more or less plane part (37) to the following groove top (35') is more or less vertical.

12. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-11, *char-5acterised* in that it consists of two similarly-shaped half parts (32,34) joined by locking means/assembly means (30), the subtending edges (36) of said half parts (32,34) defining an envisaged first plane (38) which coincides substantially with the first transverse axis (breadth axis) (20), and the sides facing away from each other extending in an arched manner, and where the locking/assembly 10 means (30) are arranged such that the two half parts (32,34) are relatively displaceable away from and towards the first plane (38), between a first outer position where a slot-shaped opening (40) arises between the subtending sides (42,44) of the half parts, and a random position where said sides (42,44) can be in contact with each other, and where between the half parts there can be inserted 15 forcing means (46) for locking of the half parts (32,34) in the first outer position.

13. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 12, *characterised* in that the two similar half parts (32,34) consist of a first half shell (48) and a second half shell (50), which in combination form a cavity (8) which is open at the 20 foot end (16) of the board, and that said cavity (8) stands in connection with the surface (12) of the board via the perforations/holes (10).

14. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 12 or 13, *characterised* in that the locking means (30) are arranged in such a manner that the two 25 half parts (32,48,34,50) are relatively displaceable away from and towards the first plane (38), between a first outer position where a slot-shaped opening arises between the edges (36) of the half parts, and a second outer position where the subtending edges (36) of the half parts (32,34) are placed in a position closer to the first plane (38), and where the distension element/pelt board (6) at least 30 comprises forcing means (46) which can be activated for the locking of the half parts (32,34) in the first outer position.

15. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 12-14, *char-*

acterised in that between the two half shells (48,50), on the subtending sides (52,54) of these, there are a number of similarly-shaped but laterally reversed studs (56) projecting from said sides, with freely extending ends (58) comprising a plane side (60) and from here, in the direction towards the starting point of the 5 respective studs in the respective subtending sides (52,54) and towards the foot (16) of the board, sloping sides (62), and where the plane sides are terminated on a level near the first plane (38), and where in between said half shells (50,52) in the longitudinal axis (18) of the board, the forcing means (46) consist of a displaceable element (64) for taking up an advanced position and a retracted position, where the element (64) comprises wedge-shaped projections (66) which, 10 in the element's advanced position, are localised pressed in between plane sides (60) of the studs, and where in the retracted position of the element (64) the wedge-shaped projections are placed outside the planes (60) of the sloping sides (62) of the studs (56).

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16. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 12-15, characterised in that the subtending sides (52,54) of the half shells (48,50) comprise stiffeners (80,82).

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17. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 12-16, characterised in that the similarly-shaped, laterally-reversed studs (56) are projecting from the stiffeners (80,82).

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18. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 14-17, characterised in that the element (64), which is displaceable in the longitudinal direction, is substantially plate-shaped and is disposed in the first plane (38) between the two half shells (48,50).

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19. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 18, characterised in that the subtending sides (52,54) of the half shells (48,50) comprise projecting parts (72,74) which cooperate with holes (76) and recesses (78) in the plate-shaped displaceable element (64) for orientation of and control of the extent of the longitudinal displacement of the plate-shaped element (64).

20. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 12-19, *characterised* in that the locking means (30) for joining the half parts (48,50) consist of cooperating elements (84,86) projecting from the respective subtending sides (52,54) of the half parts (48,50), and comprise projections (88) and 5 projections (90) with openings (92) for engaging said projections (88), where the geometries of the openings (92) and the projections (88) are mutually proportioned in such a manner that the projections (88), after being pressed in to the openings (92), are secured in a displaceable manner in the openings (92).

10 21. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 14-20, *characterised* in that the operable forcing means (46,64) in the pelt board (6) further comprise means for displacement of the two half parts/shells (48,50) from the first distended position to a second outer position, where the edges (36) of the two half parts/shells (48,50) are in contact with each other, by displacement of the 15 forcing means (48,64) to the retracted position.

22. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 21, *characterised* in that the additional means consist of tongues (142) on the plate-shaped element (64), said tongues (142) having sloping wedge surfaces which, from a plane 20 surface (146) nearest the free ends (148) of the tongues, decrease in the direction towards the starting points (150) of the tongues, said sloping wedge surfaces (144) and plane surfaces (146) cooperating with side surfaces (152) in bridges (154) on the subtending sides of the half shells (48,50), into which bridges (154) the tongues (142) are introduced in the assembly of the distension element/pelt 25 board (6).

23. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 21 and 22, *characterised* in that the free ends (148) of the tongues further comprise a projection (156), which in the assembly of the pelt board (6), which comprises a first half shell 30 (48) and a second half shell (50) consisting of similarly-shaped laterally reversed elements and a plate-shaped element (64) which, after being placed in a starting position between said two half shells (48,50) with the free ends (148) of the tongues (142) placed opposite the subtending pairs of bridges (154) on the two half shells (48,50), is displaced from the starting position in the direction towards

the front end (14) of the half shells (48,50), by which movement the tongues (142) and therewith the projections (156) are pressed in through the openings (158) in the bridges, so that the projections (156) are displaced to a position behind a bridge side (160), this side facing away in relation to the starting point (150) of the 5 tongues, whereby the plate-shaped element (64) alone will subsequently be able to be displaced between the outer positions.

24. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 21-23, characterized in that along a part of the side edges (162), the plate-shaped 10 element (64) further comprises V-shaped tracks (164) for the engaging of guide pins (166) projecting from the subtending sides (52,54) of the first half shell (48) and the second half shell (50) respectively, so that by displacement of the plate-shaped element (64) to the advanced position, said side edges are displaced sideways away from the longitudinal axis 18 to a position where the side edges 15 (162) fill out the slot-shaped opening (40) between the edges (36) of the half parts, whereby with the distension element/pelt board in the distended position they constitute a part of the outer side surface of the pelt board.

25. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 21-24, characterized in that the side edges (162) have a corrugated extent, so that 20 between these and the edges (36) of the subtending sides (52,54) of the half shells (48,50), channels (168) are formed which stand in connection with the cavity (8) defined by the half shells (48,50).

26. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 21-25, characterized in that the part of the plate-shaped element (64), where the side edges comprise the V-shaped tracks (164), extends mainly between the foot end (16), and at a distance from the foot end (16), where the extent of the board in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is 25 more or less constant, to and including a part of the area (33) where the extent of the board in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less evenly 30 decreasing in the direction towards the front end (14).

27. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 12-26, characterised in that the forcing means (46) or the plate-shaped element (64) in extension of the end (66) nearest the foot (16) of the board, comprises a stubby projecting element (68) which extends outside the foot end (16) of the pelt board

5 (6).

28. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 27, characterised in that the stubby projecting element (68) comprises counter-hold surfaces (170).

10 29. Distension element/pelt boards (6) according to claim 27 and 28, characterised in that the free end of the stubby projecting element (68) is tapered.

15 30. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 27-29, characterised in that the stubby projecting element (68) comprises a narrowed-down wedge-shaped part (70) which is substantially oriented transversely to the longitudinal axis (18) of the pelt board.

20 31. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 27-30, characterised in that the stubby projecting element (68) comprises projecting ribs (172) extending in parallel in the longitudinal axis (18) and parallel with the second transverse axis (22) (the height axis), said ribs further extending over a part of the plate-shaped element (64), and in that the subtending sides (52,54) of the half shells (48,50) comprise longitudinal ribs (174) which extend parallel with the ribs (172) projecting from that part of the ribs which extends over the plate-shaped element (64), whereby by their mutual positioning and extent the ribs (172,174) form a channel (176) for the blowing of air into or the sucking of air out of the board's cavity (8).

25 32. Distension element/pelt board according to any of the claims 27-31, characterised in that the ribs (172) extend between the foot end (16), and at a distance from the foot end (18), where the extent of the board in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less constant, to and including a part of the area (33) where the extent of the board in relation to the longitudinal axis (18) in the direction towards the first transverse

axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less evenly decreasing in the direction towards the front end (14).

33. Distension element/pelt board according to any of the claims 27-32, *characterised* in that the distance between the ribs (174) on subtending sides (52,54) of the half shells (48,50) is narrowed down in that end of the board which is nearest the board's upper end (the cranium end), in an area where the plate-shaped element (64) does not comprise longitudinal ribs (172).

10 34. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-33, *characterised* in that the surfaces (26,28) at the front end (14) comprise a plurality of slot-shaped openings (94).

15 35. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-34, *characterised* in that the front end (14) comprises means (96) for securing the nose end of a pelt placed and stretched on the pelt board.

20 36. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 35, *characterised* in that the means for securing the nose end of a pelt stretched on the pelt board (6) consist of spaced, short, projecting parallel pins (178) extending parallel with the longitudinal axis (18), and extending from the pointed end of the respective half shells (48,50).

25 37. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to the claims 35 and 36, *characterised* in that the area of the pointed end of the half shells (48,50) between the subtending sides of the pins (178) is bevelled.

30 38. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-37, *characterised* in that the surfaces (26,28) of the board comprise spaced recesses (180,182) in an area which extends from near the pointed/cranium end and towards that area of the board (6) where its extent in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less constant.

39. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-38, *characterised* in that the surfaces (26,28) of the board comprise spaced recesses (180,182) in an area which extends from near the pointed/cranium end and towards that area of the board (6) where its extent in the direction of the first transverse axis (20) and the second transverse axis (22) is more or less constant.

acterised in that it consists of plastic, polymeric or fibre-reinforced plastic material, or combinations of said materials.

40. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 4-38, characterised in that it is made of polystyrene.

41. Distension element/pelt board (6) according to claim 40, characterised in that it is produced by injection moulding.

42. Drying aggregate (100) according to claim 3, for use together with a distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 27-41, characterised in that it comprises an encapsulation (102) which defines a cavity (104), and an air replacement arrangement (106) for changing the air existing in the cavity (104), said encapsulation (102) comprising at least an upwardly-facing surface (110) with a plurality of first openings (112) and, under said surface (110), a plurality of substantially U-shaped profile rails (114) extending in parallel, the bottoms of which comprise openings with a geometry and in number which correspond to the first openings (112), said openings cooperating with the projecting element (68) which extends outside the foot end (16) of a distension element/pelt board (6) for the placing of at least one, preferably a plurality of distension elements/pelt boards (6), standing upright from the upwardly-facing surface (110), with the foot end (16) of the board in contact with the upwardly-facing surface (110), and further openings (120,120') near the respective first openings (112) lying within the limit of the foot ends (16) of the respective pelt boards, so that the further openings (120,120') stand in connection with the cavities (8) in the respective distension elements/pelt boards (6) which are placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110), so that the air in the cavity (8) of a distension element/pelt board (6) which is placed in the upwardly-facing surface (110) is changed by replacement of the air in the cavity (104) by an air replacement arrangement (106).

43. Drying aggregate (100) according to claim 42, characterised in that the first openings (112) and the further openings (120,120') are arranged in rows extending parallel in the upwardly-facing surface (110), and where in the cavity (104) under said surface (110), in slots (122) in the ribs (124,126) of the U-shaped

profile rails (114), there are displaceable drawplates (128) parallel with the upwardly-facing surface (110), said drawplates (128) having similarly-shaped through-going cut-outs (130) for engaging the projecting element (68) which extends outside the foot end (16) of a distension element/pelt board (6), and

5 where each through-going cut-out (130) comprises a projection (132) which cooperates with the wedge-shaped, part (70) on the projecting element (68), which is oriented in a substantially transverse manner to the longitudinal axis (18) of the pelt board, so that a displacement of a drawplate (128) between a first outer position where the projections (132) are not in engagement with the wedge-shaped part (70), to a second outer position where the projections (132) are in engagement with the wedge-shaped part (70), will result in the slot-shaped holes or cut-outs (66) in the plate-shaped element being displaced to a position outside the plane sides (60) of the studs (56), whereby the subtending sides (52,54) of the half parts (32,34,48,50) become displaceable/controlled to a position where the

10 subtending sides/edges of the pelt board are lying closer to each other.

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44. Drying aggregate according to claim 42, *characterised* in that the drawplates (128) comprise parts (134) extending freely through a side (136) of the encapsulation (102), said parts (134) comprising through-going openings (137) for establishing traction facilities for displacement of the drawplates (128).

45. Drying aggregate (100) according to claim 3, for use together with a distension element/pelt board (6) according to any of the claims 31-41, *characterised* in that it comprises an encapsulation (102) which defines a cavity (104), and an air replacement arrangement (106) for the changing of the air existing in the cavity (108), said encapsulation (102) comprising at least an upwardly-facing surface (110) with a plurality of first openings (112) and, under said surface (110), a plurality of substantially U-shaped profile rails (114) arranged in parallel, the bottoms (116) of which comprise openings (118) with a geometry and number

25 which corresponds to the first openings (112), said openings (112,118) cooperating with the projecting element (68) which extends outside the foot end (16) of a distension element/pelt board (6) for the placing of at least one, preferably a plurality of distension elements/pelt boards (6) standing upright from the upwardly-facing surface (110), with the foot end (16) of the board in contact

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with the upwardly-facing surface (110), and where the changing of the air in the cavity (8) in the pelt board (6) takes place by the blowing-in of air by the air replacement arrangement (106), said air being led to the cavity (8) in the board via the channels (176) defined by the ribs (172,174), and where the air is dispersed

5 within the board in an area where the distance between the ribs (172,174) on the subtending sides of the half shells (48,50) is reduced, with approx. 1/3 being led out through the openings (94) at the front end (14) of the pelt board (6), and approx. 2/3 being led out via the open structure at the foot end (16) of the pelt board (6).

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46. Drying aggregate (100) according to claim 45, *characterised* in that the encapsulation comprises displaceable elements which cooperate with the counter-holding surfaces (170) of the short projecting element (68), where the activation of said displaceable elements results in a displacement of the forcing means (46,64) 15 oriented in the longitudinal axis (18) of the pelt board, and in a direction away from the board's foot end (16), whereby the forcing means assume their second outer position.

47. Drying aggregate (100) according to any of the claims 42-46, *characterised* in that it is placed on wheels (140) whereby it becomes mobile.

48. Drying aggregate (100) according to any of the claims 42-47, *characterised* in that the air replacement arrangement (106) for changing the air in the cavity (108) in the encapsulation (102) consists of a blower unit (138) which can 25 be integrated with the encapsulation (102).

49. Drying aggregate (100) according to any of the claims 42-46, *characterised* in that the air replacement arrangement (106) for changing the air in the cavity (108) in the encapsulation (102) consists of a suction unit which can be 30 integrated with the encapsulation (102).